

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
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R 101222Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8966
INFO AMEMBASSY LIMA
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 1085

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PFOR, PE, SP
SUBJECT: VISIT TO SPAIN OF PERUVIAN FOREIGN MINISTER

REF: LIMA 817

1. AS FORESHADOWED REFTEL, THE VISIT TO MADRID OF PERUVIAN FOREIGN MINISTER DE LA PUENTE WAS OUTWARDLY MARKED BY CULTURAL, ECONOMIC, AND TECHNOLOGICAL MATTERS, WITH AN EXCHANGE OF INSTRUMENTS OF RATIFICATION OF THE CULTURAL AGREEMENT SIGNED IN LIMA IN 1971, AND WITH EXTENSIVE REFERENCES IN THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE TO THE PERUVIAN PURCHASE (FINANCED BY THE GOS) OF \$5 MILLION IN TEXTBOOKS, SPANISH TECHNICAL EDUCATIONAL ASSISTANCE, TECHNICAL COOPERATION IN A VARIETY OF FIELDS, AND SPANISH INTEREST IN MINING AND STEEL AS WELL AS THE MAJES RIVER BASIN PROJECT. THE COMMUNIQUE ALSO REFERRED TO SPANISH FONMIN OREJA'S REQUEST THAT THE GOP CONSIDER THE QUESTION OF AIR LINKS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. THE GOS UNDERTOOK TO TRY TO BRING THE BALANCE OF PAYMENTS, HEAVILY IN SPAIN'S FAVOR, INTO GREATER EQUILIBRIUM.

2. THE PRINCIPAL POLITICAL NOTE, SOUNDED IN THE VISIT'S
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PRESS COVERAGE, WAS THE IDEA THAT THE VISIT MARKED THE END OF A PERIOD OF DISTINCTLY COOL RELATIONS. IN HIS CONTACTS WITH THE PRESS DE LA PUENTE ALSO SOUGHT TO DOWNPLAY THE NOTION THAT PERU HAD SHIFTED TO THE RIGHT, INSISTING THAT ADJUSTMENTS AND CORRECTIONS, A MORE "GRADUALIST" APPROACH, DID NOT MEAN THE ABANDONMENT OF ORIGINAL GOALS OR ANY KIND OF STEP BACKWARDS.

3. DISCUSSING THE VISIT WITH EMBOFF, FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS (BERMUDEZ DE CASTRO, DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR IBERO-AMERICA, AND CERVERA, CHIEF FOR SOUTH AMERICA) MADE CLEAR ITS GREATEST SIGNIFICANCE INDEED LAY IN THE END IT MARKED TO AN EXTENDED PERIOD OF TROUBLED RELATIONS. CITING SPANISH DENIALS OF PERUVIAN EXTRADITION REQUESTS AS THE FOCAL POINT OF THE DIFFICULTIES, BERMUDEZ DE CASTRO ALSO INTIMATED THAT EX-PRESIDENT VELASCO'S TEMPERAMENT HAD BEEN AN IMPORTANT FACTOR. FORMALLY, HE ADDED, DE LA PUENTE'S VISIT RETURNED THE ONE MADE TO PERU BY THEN-FOREIGN MINISTER LOPEZ BRAO IN 1971, AND THUS HAD BEEN CONSIDERABLY DELAYED.

4. BERMUDEZ DE CASTRO ALSO SAID THAT DURING HIS VISIT DE LA PUENTE HAD TOLD THEM THAT TENSIONS WITH CHILE HAD SUBSIDED APPRECIABLY RECENTLY. NOTING THAT THEY HAD BEEN GLAD TO HEAR THIS (AND INDICATING THAT IT COINCIDED WITH THEIR OWN APPRECIATION OF THE SITUATION), THE OFFICIALS EXPRESSED CONCERN NEVERTHELESS THAT THE HEAVY BUILD-UP STILL MEANT THAT A SMALL INCIDENT COULD SET OFF A DIS-PROPORTIONATE REACTION. BOTH BERMUDEZ DE CASTRO (WHO HAS SERVED IN LIMA) AND CERVERA (WHO SERVED IN SANTIAGO) THOUGHT THAT PERU HAD THE EDGE IN ARMAMENT BUT THAT CHILEAN MANPOWER WAS MORE EFFECTIVE, AND THEY SUGGESTED THAT ONE FACTOR IN PERU'S BACKING OFF HAD BEEN THE IDEA THAT IF THE SCENARIO OF A QUICK STRIKE FOLLOWED BY INTERNATIONAL PEACE ACTION DID NOT PLAY OUT AS PLANNED, PERU COULD WELL FIND ITSELF ON THE LOSING END. STABLER

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